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paign of cunning and insincere boosting in the press, backed up by the capital of more or less dishonest speculators in the world of art.

The truth is the world is too full of neurosis and inconsequence too much admiration of mere flip and cleverness and as a final consequence too much ego-mania. And we agree with Ruskin:

"I could show that a nation cannot be affected by any vice or wickedness without expressing it legibly and forever, either in bad art or by want of art; that there is no national virtue small or great which is not manifestly expressed in all the art which circumstances enable the people possessing that virtue to produce."

INDEPENDENCE IN ART AND THE "SALON DES INDÉPENDANTS" IN PARIS AND NEW YORK

WHEN Mme. Roland at the foot of the guillotine cried "Oh, Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" she uttered a profound truth applicable both to the political and artistic worlds.

When, at the birth of Modern art, through the rebellion in 1804 of Baron Gros, Géricault and others against the "tyranny" of David and the classic school, certain artists launched the cry—"Liberty in Art!" which became the slogan of the romantic

The origin of the Salon of the Independents goes back to the "Salon of the Refused" of 1863, when the Jury of that year unceremoniously kicked out the works of a number of artists who had ceased to be simply Modern and had become "modernistic," which means—romantic art run to seed. True, their modernistic-ness-ness-ness was only slight compared with the joyous modernism of to-day. But still they were not "independents" then, they were rejected beggars for medals and honors who had



THE "MASTERPIECE" OF THE ASS "BORONALI" APPLAUDED BY SOME OF THE "MODERNISTIC" PERSUASION

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movement, little did they dream that the "stream of tendency" which they started would widen out and end in that mad-house barracks called "Le Salon des Indépendants" a quarter of a mile long, built of cheap slats, canvas and sawdust, winding its way like a fakir's fair along the banks of the Seine and filled with now senile, now weird, now monstrous art creations. Thither the common-sense Frenchmen go only to laugh, as they do at their annual "Foire aux Jambons" or "Ham-Fair," where one munches and laughs at all sorts of sausages made from all sorts of meats, from goat's to mule's meat!

raised such a row because their works had been thrown out as unfit for even exhibition—and more unfit for ribbons and medals which they so yearned for. Napoleon III, then feeling his throne shaky, to placate these rioters, ordered the Fine Arts Department to give them at least a place in which they could exhibit their works, and in the same building which housed the official Salon. This has been known since as the "Salon of the Refused." It was the last one of these independent Salons until a certain number of other disgruntled artists rebelled against the official Salon, seceded and organized a new one, and abolished the system of



CREATION OF THE PICTURE: "AND THE SUN SANK TO HIS SLEEP UPON THE ADRIATIC SEA"
The Ass "Boronali" Painting the "Masterpiece" with the Assistance of Protestors Against Excessivism in Art, on the Hill of Montmartre, Paris.

(See page 105)

giving medals; but they raised a no less effective barrier against incompetent or insane art by electing to their number only such artists as agreed with them; they allowed only such to exhibit. They called this the "National Salon," and this is now as much despised by the license-loving "modernists" as was the old official Salon. These two Salons were housed in the magnificent Fine Arts Palace on the Champs Elysées.

Shortly after this a gnawing hunger "to get into the lime-light" took possession of thousands who, by virtue of incompetence could go only so far in art, but yearned nevertheless to exhibit their more-or-less childish or over-radical creations somewhere, somehow. This effervescence of egotism finally crystallized in the opening of the "Salon of the Independents"—with no jury, no medals and free for all and welcome!

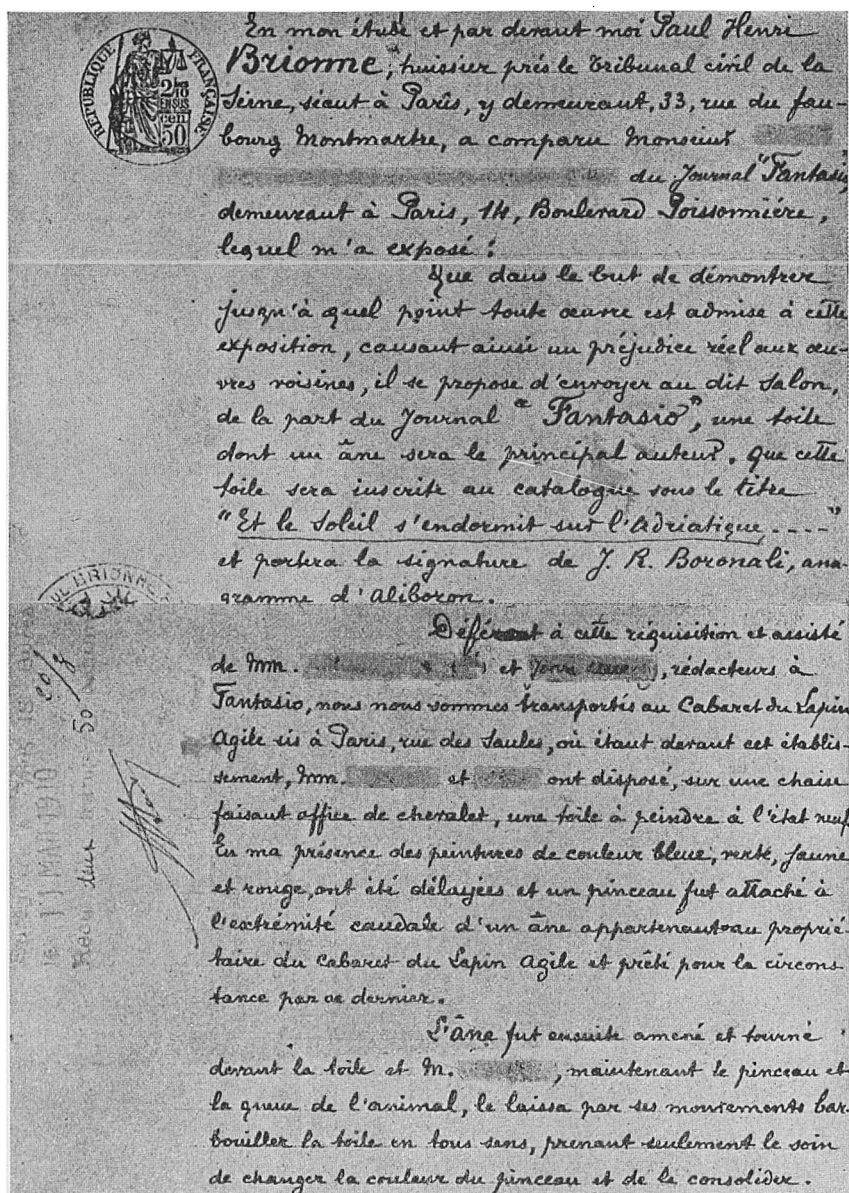
It was really a joke played on the whole world by the jocose and delightful Parisian leaders of French commerce, bent on keeping Paris the center of the world of art at all hazards, because Germany was making herculean efforts to transfer this center to Berlin. If successful, that would have been injurious to French commerce, and these Parisians are past masters in the application of the philosophy of our own Barnum—that every man loves to be humbugged at least once in his life—if only to know how it feels—and each one in his turn! Did not Emerson say: "The finished man of the world should have tasted of every apple at least once"?

It is safe to say the world never saw such a ham-fair of æsthetic monstrosities. And all Paris shed tears of laughter for weeks and all the world came to see this new cuttle-fish in the world of art. The joke was such a haw-haw success, it created so much talk that it hugely advertised Paris—like the "Moulin Rouge" in the Place Pigalle which every bright Frenchman avoids as a frightful bore, but votes to keep up in order to allure the dollars and shillings out of the pockets of the curious Englishmen and Americans. We cannot blame the Paris merchants for this clever business, because they did only that which other merchants in other large centers did. But it is wise, for a proper valuation of the art works exposed in these ginger-bread fairs, to know the hocus-pocus at the bottom of it all.

So this independent Salon was kept up as a mere advertising scheme. Did not Eugène Scribe say: "Charlatanism? Why, everybody uses it in

Paris; it is approved, it is received, it is current coin!"

After a year or two there came on the scene the shrewd and O, so suave, Paris art dealer! He also scented that there was "all kinds of money" in this new æsthetic cuttle-fish—above all because it lent itself to muddying the waters and to all sorts of "ways that are dark and tricks that are vain," as our dear Bret Harte said of his "heathen Chinees." How these delectable gentry worked the



AFFIDAVIT IN FRENCH TO PROVE THAT THE HOAX ON THE "INDEPENDENTS" OF PARIS WAS REALLY PLAYED.

game we will tell in a future article. For the present we will content ourselves by relating an incident that once more lifted Paris to the upper air of joy—it was so funny. It took place in 1910.

At that time there lived a comic journal *The Fantasio*. The managers conceived the idea of exposing the fathomless idiocy of at least some professional newspaper art critics who—for pay of course—boosted by hypocritical laudations the grotesque trash exhibited in the "Independent Salon," among whose exhibitors there were—

according to one Paris journal which had investigated the social status of the exhibitors—Tramps, Bungmen, Cobblers, Barbers, Coachmen, Policemen, Street-sweepers, Thieves, etc., among others who were in "high society" and as mere cynical dilettanti tried to dispel their boredom by fabricating these jokes, sending them to the exhibition and seeing Paris laugh with themselves. The scheme of the *Fantasio* worked, and Paris had its laugh and quoted to the shocked dignified portion of the citizens the delicious remark of Beaumarchais: "We must laugh at it in order not to cry."

But we shall let the story tell itself by giving a translation of an article from the Paris *L'Illustration* of April 2nd, 1910, and also offer the illustrations which accompany that article. (See pages 102-104):—

"A HOAX AT THE SALON OF THE INDEPENDENTS,
PARIS"

In his *Courrier de Paris* last week our collaborator Henri Lavedan unveiled to us the black conspiracy fomented by his friend "The Groucher," viz.: to make ready against the coming spring, once and for all, one of those *beffas* at the show of the "Independents"—which has just opened its twenty-sixth annual salon at the Cours-la-Reine—one of those *beffas* or vile hoaxes which are epoch-making in the history of enterprises the best fortified against ridicule!

Well, the black-bilious Placide is overtaken, surpassed—so much so, that if one did not know his character, one might think that M. Lavedan had been in the secret all along: the *beffa* has just been practised by the giddy journal *Fantasio* with complete success, and, what is better, is registered, legalized and attested by the proper papers.

Some weeks ago certain newspapers received an incendiary manifesto proclaiming the *Æsthetics* of the Excessive School.

It was signed by the sonorous but hitherto unknown name of Joachim-Raphael Boronali.

"Excess in everything is a power," said he "the only power. The sun is never too hot, the sky too green, the distant sea too red, the darkness too thickly obscure. . . . Let us ravage the absurd museums of art; let us trample on the infamous routine works of the makers of candy-boxes! . . . No more lines, no more wabbling, no more master-ship—but dazzlement, rich redness!!"

Less than eight days later at the Salon des Indépendants the people who go crazy over originality, the good *snobs* (using the English word) whom the most childish audacities enchant when they are spread to catch their eye, turned their attention fixedly upon a stunning canvas on which the reds, greens and blues screamed one against the other at the top of their voices—freed from every rule, escaped from every line—in perfect illustration of the manifesto uttered by Joachim-Raphael Boronali!

It was signed by this same ultramontane name and called itself very poetically: "And the Sun Sank to his Sleep upon the Adriatic Sea." (See page 102.) On the other hand it did not explode so entirely without all measure in the midst of so many other merciless daubs.

Alas, alas! Those who admired it did not notice that Boronali was nothing but (yet very trans-

parently) the anagram of Aliboron! (This word is used by Rabelais in the sense of an ass and a fool.)

Now the masterpiece of painting which had moved certain souls easily fired by enthusiasm was really and truly painted . . . by a donkey!—not only by a donkey, but with his tail!" (See page 103.)

The jolly photograph reproduced above shows the Artist at work in the midst of a group of young men and women, the artists who had conceived, in order to protest against the excessive eclecticism and exclusiveness of the Indépendants, the plan of this laughable farce, and succeeded to the full in putting it through. And the affidavit drawn by Lawyer Brionne at the request of *Fantasio* stating that he saw the intelligent donkey, well known to the denizens of the Butte Montmartre, hard at work on the canvas, permits of no attempt at denial of the fact. (See page 104.)

Can we nourish the hope at least that the adventure shall save us from the Excessivist School, and deliver us from the priests, pontiffs and scatterers of incense? . . .

The writer saw the canvas illustrated here (page 102) in the Independent Salon of that year, also some of the foolish laudatory notices of it in certain Paris newspapers which unfortunately have been lost but in which this picture was called a masterpiece, etc.

We wonder, will this practical joke, which was actually played upon the Paris critics, open the eyes of the American public to the doubtful value of much of the newspaper criticisms published in Europe and also here? And will our public learn from the brief history here given of the Paris Independent Salon—which the organizers of the New York Independent Exhibition are so proud to refer to as their parent Salon and which they say has so "high a standing"—that the basis of the whole Independent Salon of Paris is mere vaudeville business—coupled with every degree of charlatanism ever practised in history? If they will only remember these things when they go to the Independent show here, they will at least laugh all the more heartily when they find that they have not been quite so much humbugged as the organizers expect will be the case.

This show is nothing but a money-making, song-and-dance Barnum circus.

Here we see spread out what seem like miles and acres of stuff, most of it inept trash, childish, vulgar and ugly in thought, design and execution; some of it clearly bearing the stigmata of the peculiar kind of moral depravity which can easily be traced to that band of epicureans in vice of the Second Empire and their immediate disciples of which Baudelaire and Oscar Wilde were the shining lights, works that have secret, cryptic and highly suggestive meanings to the initiated of the *cénacle* of the "modernistic" art-prophets and protagonists of every form and "ism" of æsthetic insanity from cubism to futurism, in which are sounded the abysmal depths of intellectual degeneracy.

There are said to be 2,500 works. Among them are certainly not more than fifty which from any point of view are worthy of more than a second glance. And there are certainly not more than half a dozen which technically are even above the mediocre, and those were mostly contributed by men who exhibit

at the exhibitions of the National Academy. There are a few transcripts of scenes in nature which, if painted by a competent craftsman, would make beautiful pictures, but because of their technical stupidity are heart-breaking examples of fools rushing in where angels fear to tread. A lot of female nudes are so ugly and disgusting that the fair sex would be pardoned for sacking the whole exhibition.

Nothing could more clearly prove that the National Academy of Design in New York is not only not too strict, but not strict enough in the rejection of works of art. Nor could a more convincing proof be given of the absolute need of a jury to establish and maintain a standard which a work must reach before it can pass the portal of the temple of art—even of mediocre art—when judged by the great works of the past.

Finally, it is painful to see with what hypocrisy the charlatans in the "modernistic" art party drag in the names of great men like Ingres to whom in one breath they contemptuously refer as "academic"—without even knowing the true meaning of the term—and then, when they wish to bolster up their nefarious shows, drag in his name by quoting something the meaning of which they twist out all semblance to the real meaning attached to the remark when it was made!

Shades of Ingres! Were he here he would imitate Jesus—would belabor with a cat-o-nine-tails and chase out the vile money-changers and art fakirs who defile the Temple of Art.

This circus of hobo-art is truly an affront to the American people and a calamitous onslaught on the taste of our people and their common-sense canons of judgment. Hence, wandering through its mazes while we ridicule the show, a depression steals over

us when we come out while reflecting upon the seeds of æsthetic bewilderment sown broadcast by this conglomeration of art atrocities, whose hideous vulgarity cannot be wiped out by the baker's dozen of worthy things, most of which have been exhibited elsewhere.

What a noise its promoters have made about this affair! Yet if there ever were "much ado about nothing" as Shakespeare says and "a mountain in labor to bring forth a mouse," as the Latin has it, this Independent Exhibition bears away the palm. Independence is a fine thing, but when it degenerates into license it is a blight.

Let us hope that the few competent artists who have been so misled as to join this "galley" of artistic free-booters will never again lend their names to bolster up what seems to be nothing but a sensational scheme to advertise a few people anxious either to get into the limelight or more easily sell their wares.

Everybody in the world is an artist. Even a child making mud pies is an artist, in embryo. But great artists are rare. They do not grow on vines like tomatoes. And, besides being born to the purple, they must fight hard during a whole lifetime to overcome the many obstacles that the incompetent never surmount, which lie in the path between a hunger for notoriety and the achieving of real fame—by the creation of a great work of art. Great artists need not exhibit in any freak "Salon of the Independents."

Juries and the giving of recompenses in art exhibitions are profoundly good things, when properly managed. They become evil only when mismanaged. And all that is needful is to remedy the abuses of the system—of this we will speak at a later date.

M. BERGSON AND "THE ART WORLD"

THE visit to America of M. Henri Bergson, professor of philosophy at the Collège de France, is a matter of interest to those who have attended his lectures at the Sorbonne in Paris and to the much larger circles who have read in French or English the beautifully clear and balanced periods by means of which he has tried to explain his view of the most momentous of all subjects, the relation of mankind to the worlds of the living and the dead. With great courage he has tackled subjects that engaged the attention and baffled the wits of those thinkers of the eastern Mediterranean, long before Christ, who have the reputation among learned men of representing a high tide in human intelligence and one that reached a mark never since attained. It is pretty generally believed that, despite our advances in thought, despite the long list of brilliant writers from Kant to William James, despite our achievements in science, we are still *epigoni*, still among the descendants and disciples of the great who at one time examined the questions of whence, whither and why—as free from the fetters of tradition and racial prejudice as humanly it is possible. But such lucid presentation of these ideas as M. Bergson offers to his hearers and readers is among the privileges of our time.

M. Bergson has been greatly in demand during his stay in the United States, but he found time to meet the editors and supporters of THE ART WORLD informally, having been attracted before he left France by the spectacle of an earnest attempt in America to provide the public with a magazine devoted to the higher aspects of the arts and letters, without losing sight of matters interesting to circles of amateurs and all those that concern the daily output of artists and writers. It may be that our readers would care to know the opinion of a man of M. Bergson's attainments.

We do not violate any confidence when we say that he congratulated the United States for having anticipated other countries by the establishment of a periodical of this type, suited at once to the student and the professional, to the specialist and the wide reading-public—not so much for the needs of the writer and artist, which are supplied by special publications in their several fields, as for the advantage of the cultivated public, men who interest themselves in subjects beyond the ordinary affairs of life, beyond professional matters, business and sports, in order to find if possible those enjoyments of the mind we lump together under the term "æsthetics." (Continued, page 109)